

**MINUTES
REGULAR QUARTERLY MEETING
ARKANSAS WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
October 13, 2004**

Chairman Steve Lux called to order a meeting of the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board, at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, October 13, 2004. Members who were able to participate included Ms. Marguerite Abowitz, Senator Gilbert Baker, Mr. Bobby Blount, Ms. Sydney Case, Ms. Candis Collins, Mr. Larry Featherstone, Ms. C. Ann Fleming, Dr. Steve Franks, Mr. Willie Gilbert, Mr. Ron Harrell, proxy for Ms. Linda Beene, Ms. Diane Hilburn, Mr. Philip Hood, Mr. Alan Hughes, Ms. Catherine Janosky, Dr. Calvin Johnson, Mr. Steve Lux, Mr. Lyndel Lybarger, proxy for Mr. James Hudson, Mr. Harold Majors, Mr. Ken Milbrodt, Mr. Eddie Miller, Mr. Randy Parker, proxy for Mr. John Wyvill, Mr. Michael Rebick, Mr. Mike Norton, Mr. Jim Smith, Dr. Frieda Tirado, Mr. Steve Sparks, proxy for Mr. Larry Walther, Mr. Bill Warren, and Mr. Franklin Wise. Representatives from the public and members of the State WIB staff were present. Members who were not able to participate include Mr. Tom Anderson, Ms. Terrie Baker, Representative Mary Beth Green, Governor Mike Huckabee, Mr. Kurt Knickrehm, Mr. Jim Knight, Mr. Dalton Price, Representative Robert White, and Mr. Artee Williams.

Chairman Lux began by welcoming members to the meeting. He also thanked the Arkansas Workforce Center at Conway for hosting the quarterly meeting.

Chairman Lux then introduced Ms. Shawntel Halstead Brown, One-Stop/WIA Title I, Mr. Skeet Morse, Employment Security Department, and Ms. Ruth Ann Williams, Adult Education, who each provided a brief summary of their programs.

Chairman Lux also recognized new members appointed to the AWIB since the last quarterly meeting in July, which included Ms. C. Ann Fleming, the Chief Executive Officer of Fleming Electric at Bryant, Mr. Mike Rebick, the Chief Executive Officer of Copy Systems, Inc., Ms. Diane Hilburn, Senior Vice President of Human Resources for the Bank of the Ozarks, Ms. Marguerite Abowitz, Human Resources Manager, Potlach Corp., Mr. Franklin Wise, Administrator of the Fulton County Hospital at Salem, Mr. Bill Warren, owner of Twin City Brokerage Inc. at North Little Rock, Mr. Willie Gilbert, owner of American Art Gallery, Ms. Sydney Case, ArkansasAccessibility, Mr. Philip Hood, AllState.

Action Item 1 - Minutes: Chairman Lux directed the attention of the members to the minutes of the September 14, 2004 Executive Committee meeting.

The minutes were approved on a motion made by Ms. Catherine Janosky, seconded by Mr. Alan Hughes, and carried unanimously.

Report of Executive Director: Chairman Lux asked Ms. Winston for the Executive Director's report. Ms. Winston began by welcoming everyone to Conway.

Ms. Winston then presented several new marketing tools to promote workforce development and Arkansas Workforce Centers. She first provided a copy of a two-page advertisement that would be placed in *Next Magazine*, which high school juniors and seniors receive. Ms. Catherine Janosky inquired as to who designed the advertisement and the cost. Ms. Winston stated that she, Mr. Artee Williams, and Ms. Kimberly Friedman, AESD Communication Director, designed the ad and the cost was \$10,000 per page. She explained AESD and AWIB shared the cost of the advertisement. Ms. Winston stated copies of *Next Magazine* would be provided for the board members at the next meeting.

Ms. Winston then described two hand guide booklets, *Rapid Guide to Job Hunting* and *Rapid Guide to Interviewing Preparation*. She explained benefits of providing the guides to workforce centers include improved public relations through custom printed guides, including local contact information and logos, and is also a valuable resource to better prepare clients in need of employment. She stated that local Title I providers and staff provided positive feedback regarding the guides. She also stated the cost would be \$157,000 for 75,000 copies of each guide.

Ms. Winston also discussed the AESD/AWIB joint newsletter, *News 'N Views*. She explained the newsletter contains information about events that occur in both agencies, and is emailed to all staff.

Ms. Winston distributed a copy of the AWIB annual report. She explained Board members would receive a bound copy of the annual report once they have been printed.

Next, Ms. Winston stated that she and Mr. Williams met with local area managers and supervisors to discuss how to improve relationships with employers. She referred to possibly reestablishing Local Employment Advisory Councils, although information was still being compiled. She stated an update would be given at a future board meeting.

Ms. Winston discussed the AWIB/AESD Leadership Development Program that was recently developed to prepare the next generation of leaders. She stated it is an 18-month program for mid-level, senior-level, and upper-level personnel. She also stated each participant was provided a senior management mentor.

Lastly, Ms. Winston briefly discussed the legislative audit, stating that the integration of AWIB/AESD staff would now be reversed. Ms. Winston explained that most of the changes would be in the organizational flowchart, specifically, reporting procedures. AWIB staff could not report to AESD staff and vice versa. Representative Johnson asked why the integration was being reversed. It was explained that although it is constitutionally allowable, it is statutorily suspect according to the Arkansas Attorney General. Several questions were raised by Board members regarding the effect of the reversal of the integration. It was explained that the service delivery to a client would not change, and that AWIB and AESD would continue to work closely together.

Chairman Lux asked Ms. Winston how long it would take to complete the audit. Ms. Winston stated that once the exit interview was conducted a report would be issued within 45 days. Chairman Lux asked about the status of the Incumbent Worker Trainer Program. Ms. Winston explained that the program is still on hold until the audit is complete.

Action Item 2 – Ratification of Executive Committee Actions: Chairman Lux instructed the members to turn to action item 2 of the agenda book.

Representative Johnson made a motion to accept the ratification of Executive Committee Actions; Ms. Sydney Case seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

Action Item 3 – Transfer of PY04 Funds from Dislocated Worker to Adult Programs, Northwest Arkansas Workforce Investment Board: Chairman Lux stated it is recommended that the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board approve the transfer of PY 2004 Funds from Dislocated Worker Program to Adult Programs.

Chairman Lux explained Section 133 (b)(4) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 gives authority to transfer not more than 20% of the funds allocated at the local area for a fiscal year between Adult employment and training activities and the Dislocated Worker employment and training activities, with the Governor's approval.

Mr. Ron Snead then stated on September 1, 2004, the NAEDD Local Workforce Investment Board approved the transfer of funds equal to 20% of the Program Year 2004 WIA Title 1B Dislocated Worker allocation to the PY2004 WIA Title1B Adult allocation. The Northwest Arkansas Chief Elected Officials approved the transfer of the funds on September 15, 2004.

Mr. Snead referred to a handout that explained the reason for the request to transfer funds from the dislocated worker program to adult programs. He explained that the increase in funding to adult programs allows training services not be limited to economically disadvantaged individuals, which will allow for a percentage of persons between the poverty level and self-sufficiency level to receive training.

Ms. Catherine Janosky made a motion to approve the Transfer of PY04 Funds from Dislocated Worker to Adult Programs, Northwest Arkansas Workforce Investment Board; Mr. Alan Hughes seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously. Mr. Mike Norton abstained.

Information Item 4 – Report on Skilled Trades Initiative: Chairman Lux informed the Board that on Labor Day, September 6, 2004, Assistant Secretary of Labor, Emily Stover DeRocco, launched the "Skills to Build America's Future Initiative." He explained the initiative is designed to build national awareness about the opportunities that a career in construction and design/construction has to offer. Ms. Jean Ann Reed gave a presentation to provide additional information.

Ms. Reed stated that there would be a million new jobs in the industry by the year 2012. She explained there is not a pipeline of skilled workers to fill those positions, and thus the construction industry has been identified as one of the 12 high growth industries recognized by the Department of Labor and Department of Education. She stated that there is a defined career ladder in the industry, and that there is a need to make the workforce system available to the industry. Ms. Reed referred to the demand occupation list included in the agenda packet to review occupations and wages for the construction industry. Mr. Alan Hughes asked how unions would be able to get involved with this initiative. Ms. Reed stated they could contact her directly or contact the local workforce center.

Information Item 5 – Presentation on Reality Check: The presentation was not given due to the lack of a high-speed internet connection at the location. The information will be provided at a future meeting.

Information Item 6 – Presentation on National Governor's Association Pathways to Advancement Initiative: Chairman Lux explained that Arkansas was the only southern state selected to participate in the National Governor's Association Pathways to Advancement Policy Academy. He referred to Ms. Cindy Varner, Ms. Sharon Robinette, and Mr. Ron White who provided additional information. It was explained the project will assist six states to change policies and practices of higher education financing, program and accreditation requirements, and student financial aid to support greater numbers of adults in gaining postsecondary credentials. It was also explained that the Arkansas team's goals are to 1) Increase the attainment of postsecondary credentials through the establishment of local career pathways initiatives connected to regional high-demand/targeted jobs, and 2) Increase interest and awareness of the benefits of postsecondary education among working adults.

Information Item 7 – Presentation on Veteran’s Initiatives: Chairman Lux explained that the Department of Labor has recently taken the opportunity to reinforce several programs relating to veteran’s initiatives. He referred to Ms. Amanda Isbell to provide a brief overview of the following initiatives, Hire Veteran’s First, Operation Career Front, REALifelines, and Assistance for Returning Members of the National Guard and Military Reserves, and Mr. Ron Snead to discuss the Employer Support of Guard and Reserve Initiative.

Ms. Isbell explained the background leading to the National Hire Veterans First Campaign, explaining that the program is geared to employers to consider the skills and competencies veterans bring to the workforce, and encourages employers to hire veterans. She stated that a website was developed, www.hirevetsfirst.gov, as an access portal for employers and veterans.

She then explained the partnership between Home Depot and the U.S. Departments of Labor and Veterans Affairs, stating that the goal of the project Operation Career Front is to provide career opportunities for current and former members of America’s community.

Next, she described REALifelines, a program that creates a seamless, personalized assistance network to ensure that seriously wounded and injured service members who cannot return to active duty are trained for rewarding new careers in the private sector.

She also described National Emergency Grants, which is an opportunity to apply for funds to provide employment-related assistance for members of the National Guard and Military Reserves who were required to interrupt or postpone employment-related assistance in order to fulfill requirements involving deployment to Iraq or other locations.

Mr. Ron Snead also described the Employer Support of Guard and Reserve initiative. He explained how companies such as Tyson and Wal-Mart formed partnerships with one-stop centers to provide help for veterans seeking employment.

Announcements: Chairman Lux stated that Board members were welcome to take a tour of the Arkansas Workforce Center at Conway, and then return for lunch in the meeting room. Chairman Lux then announced that next month’s meeting would be an Executive Committee meeting, to be held Tuesday, November 9, 2004, at 9:00 a.m., at the AESD/AWIB central offices.

Adjourn: With no other announcements or questions, **Chairman Lux adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m.**



Steve Lux, Chairman



Sandra Winston, Executive Director

*Minutes recorded by Stephanie Carlo
Workforce Investment Board Staff*